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ABSTRACT

This book presents seven case studies of middle school youth service programs that challenge their participants to change from takers to givers and from observers to active members of the community. Chapter 1 discusses new ways for responding to the needs of middle school youth and promoting community service. Chapter 2 describes a tutoring program in which Hispanic "at-risk" middle-school students tutor Hispanic "at-risk" elementary school students. Chapter 3 describes a combined academic and community alternative for potential drop-outs, and chapter 4 describes a program that helps keep middle-school youth from being recruited into gangs. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 describe, respectively, programs that bring youth into nursing homes to enrich the lives of the elderly and to increase the understanding of the old by the young; involve junior high school students in community service projects; and place students in a school-based community service program. Chapter 8 describes the integration of community service with learning in 40 schools, while Chapter 9 discusses lessons learned from the case studies in terms of youth services issues and new directions for middle-school students. The book contains two brief forewords by Senator Dave Durenberger and Senator Edward M. Kennedy respectively. Related materials and a directory of case study programs are appended. (RH)

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The Adventure Of Adolescence:

Middle School Students And Community Service

Catherine A. Rolzinski

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The Adventure Of Adolescence:

Middle School Students And Community Service

YOUTH SERVICE AMERICA
MISSION STATEMENT

Youth Service America's mission is to promote an ethic of service among America's young people as an important part of their democratic heritage. YSA is an advocate and national center for youth service programs involving young people in schools, colleges and communities all across the country in part-time and full-time service. We foster the systematic engagement of young people in addressing serious societal needs, such as peer tutoring and mentoring of educationally at-risk children, caring for the elderly, and conserving the environment.

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A YOUTH SERVICE AMERICA
SPECIAL PUBLICATION

The Adventure Of Adolescence:

Middle School Students And Community Service

By Catherine A. Rolzinski

With Forewords By
U.S. Senator Dave Durenberger
U.S. Senator Edward M. Kennedy

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FOREWORDS

By United States Senator
Dave Durenberger

By United States Senator
Edward M. Kennedy

All around us a limitless and renewable natural resource is waiting to be tapped, as this nation seeks to meet unmet and unfulfilled opportunities. Youth in service is that natural resource. So much recent focus has been on the barriers to success for our nation's youth. In ***The Adventure Of Adolescence,*** Catherine A. Rolzinski offers the "missing link" that provides a pathway of hope to our nation's young people. That missing link is community service.

As Ms. Rolzinski shows, voluntary service beginning at a young age and integrating educational and self-development objectives for young people will reap life-long benefits for both recipients and volunteers. Voluntary service emerges from a "state of mind" that is most effectively nurtured from a very young age. The seeds that produce a United Way board member are most effectively planted early in life through programs like Fresh Force or other community experiences available through schools and youth organizations.

Today's young people face a range of temptations and have numerous competing demands and opportunities for the use of their time. In meeting these temptations and making positive use of time, there is great value represented by the sense of accomplishment and self-worth that community service can bring.

We all have an important stake in making youth service opportunities more available. Not only for the benefit they represent to young people, or for those they directly serve, but also for the nation as a whole. ***The Adventure Of Adolescence*** provides practical answers to giving children the self esteem they need to succeed and sets the foundation for a solution to our nation's efforts to ensure opportunity for all Americans.

DAVE DURENBERGER
United States Senator

Last year I had the opportunity to visit the Springfield public schools community service program, one of the many excellent projects featured in this book. I saw the difference that kindergartners can make in the life of a lonely senior citizen. I found third-grade classes excited by the prospect of collecting food for the homeless in their neighborhoods. I talked to a sixth-grader who helped create a conservation center and learned a little science at the same time. In ways like these, even the youngest students can sense the benefit of serving others and helping in their communities. It is a skill and commitment that they will keep all their lives.

We do not have to compel young Americans to serve their country. All we have to do is ask and provide the opportunity. By describing the Springfield program and other excellent models of middle-school service programs, ***The Adventure Of Adolescence*** reminds us that even our youngest citizens have something to give.

Community service should be the common experience of every citizen. If we are to achieve this goal, the schools are a natural place to start. The genius of American education is that we are not just educating our students to be teachers, doctors, lawyers, scientists, workers, or business men and women — we are educating them to be Americans. I hope that every school system in the nation will review the programs in this book and use these models to make community service a vital part of American education.

EDWARD M. KENNEDY
United States Senator

PREFACE

Multiple streams of youth service programs are expanding across the country, enabling more young people to be viewed as positive resources for their communities. This grassroots effort involving young people of all ages and backgrounds in service is in the best tradition of our democracy — dynamic, diverse, and decentralized. It is beautifully expressed by the words of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.,

Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve.

Youth Service America (YSA), founded in 1986, assists with the development of youth service programs and convenes and unifies the streams of service behind common ideals and goals. The *YSA 1988-1989 Education Forum Series* and the middle school programs described in this book exemplify this style of work. This set of distinct programs, developed with inspired local leadership, were convened to identify common purposes and discuss new directions to involve middle school students in community service. The case studies of these programs in San Antonio, Minneapolis, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and Los Angeles should inspire additional opportunities for young people in middle schools across the country. The spirit and practice which they represent should encourage the other streams of youth service: campus and community-based programs and full-time service and conservation corps.

Youth service has gained prominence with stunning rapidity, moving onto the agenda of The White House, the U.S. Congress, and the National Governors' Association, major foundations, professional associations and other bodies. The field is suddenly more complex and promising. Youth Service America supports the principles of best practice reflected in this book and the goal of providing all young people with opportunities to participate in quality programs.

As the youth service field continues to advance, we hope that additional publications reflecting on the streams of service will be forthcoming. We all need to stand back and reflect upon the diversity of programs and models and strategies for developing the field in keeping with our core beliefs about the power of youth service. YSA will continue to convene the leadership and assist with program promotion and development.

We extend our thanks to our many colleagues and hope you will find this book stimulating and helpful.

Roger Landrum
Frank Slobig

YSA Co-Directors

INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Barriers to success for our nation's young people have been the focus of recent national commission studies. Two significant reports strike a common chord by recommending that communities and schools develop community service program opportunities for young people to contribute to the needs of their communities and also reap benefits for themselves in the process. The November 1988 report of the William T. Grant Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship, *The Forgotten Half: Pathways to Success for America's Youth and Young Families*, describes it this way:

> *At the core of citizenship is the willingness to contribute to the common good. When young people are asked to channel their idealism and energy into helping others and solving problems, they build respect for themselves and attachments to others.*

Turning Points, issued in June 1989 by the Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents of the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, focuses on the particular problems facing middle school students between the ages of 10 and 15. Problems of drugs, alcohol, crime, early pregnancy, family disruption, school dropouts, poverty and limited community support are now exacerbating the already difficult developmental transitions facing young ado-

lescents. *Turning Points* informs us that by age 15:

> *Millions of American youth are at risk of reaching adulthood unable to meet adequately the requirements of the workplace, the commitments of relationships in families and with peers, and the responsibilities of participation in a multicultural society and of citizenship in a democracy. These youngpeople often suffer from underdeveloped intellectual abilities, indifference to good health, and cynicism about the values that American society embodies.*

One of the eight recommendations in *Turning Points* to address these problems and intervene with "at-risk" conditions is: Youth service in the community should be part of the core program in middle school education.

The mission of Youth Service America (YSA) is to promote an ethic of service among America's young people as an important part of their democratic heritage. YSA appreciates the opportunity afforded by a grant from The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation to focus on middle grade students in community service, to give particular attention to programs with "at-risk" students providing service, to identify model programs around the country, and to extract the lessons learned from these case studies.

YSA undertook the challenge to develop its knowledge base of young adolescents and youth service by first searching its databank for middle school youth service programs, by communicating with experts in related fields of work, and by visiting programs across the country. Although "middle school" may range from the fifth through the ninth grades, the YSA project case studies focused

primarily on students in the sixth through eighth grades. These grades were where most of the youth service programming existed within middle schools, and evidence of "at risk" behavior was identified in these grades as well.

The first five programs in the YSA project are presented because of the diverse nature of their locations, program approaches, funding sources, administrative structures, participant selection processes, and the program operator's interest in working with YSA. These programs are Clean and Green, Fresh Force, Magic Me, Project OASES and the Valued Youth Partnership Program. Challenger Middle School and the Springfield, Massachusetts School District are also presented as examples of ways in which administrators are changing the structure of their schools to support youth service. The degree of information and analysis varies with each of the case studies. This is based largely on the number of years of operation and development of each of the programs at the time of my study.

As the project director, I had the opportunity to visit the case study projects. My interviews with program participants were the most rewarding part of the site visits. Talking with these youngsters involved in their community service activities provided me with a first-hand opportunity to witness the influence of youth service on their lives. I included quotes from young people to help capture the essence of the service experiences of middle grade students.

The *YSA 1988-1989 Education Forum Series on Youth Service Issues and New Directions for Middle School Programs* convened quarterly over the course of the project. The Forum members included the case-study program operators as well as national youth leaders, policymakers and foundation program officers. They re-

sponded to the issues presented by the case study program directors and identified emerging common themes and their broader implications for youth service program opportunities for middle grade students.

One of the more complicated challenges of the project involved clarifying the definition of the term "at-risk." Forum members used the label, but they agreed the term was so overused to include most problems confronting young people, that there was no consensus on its meaning. The only two case studies that included a definition for their targeted "at-risk" programs were developed to improve school performance. The Valued Youth Partnership Program defines "at-risk" as meaning students performing two grades below the norm for their grade level. OASES targets "at-risk" students as those young people who are drop-out prone based on a listing of criteria considered in concert with extensive discussions, recommendations and agreements between the school staff, parents, and each student considered for the program.

Fresh Force does not target "at-risk" adolescents, but aims to involve as many and as diverse a group of junior high school students as possible. Challenger Middle School and the Springfield School District also do not target "at-risk" young people, but strive to involve all students within the schools. The Magic Me and Clean and Green programs recruit young adolescents from schools that consider them to be "at-risk," but utilize a more general definition. The meaning of "at-risk" in the context of this book is encapsuled in the working definition, including the broader combination of problems, cited in the earlier *Turning Points* excerpt.

YSA acknowledges with sincere appreciation the time, commitment and expertise so conscientiously provided by Forum

members in the guidance of the project. They include:

Alfred de la Cuesta, Magic Me
Martha Diepenbrock, Clean and Green
Gayle Dorman, Lilly Endowment, Inc.
Wanda Fleming, The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation
Barbara Gomez, Council of Chief State School Officers
Timothy Gusk, Fresh Force
Anthony W. Jackson, Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development
Donald Joiner, Challenger Middle School
Carol Kinsley, Springfield Public Schools
Roger Landrum, Youth Service America
Al Markowski, Project OASES
Maria Nagorski, National Crime Prevention Council
Karabelle Pizzigati, U. S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth & Families
Thomas Rhodenbough, Save the Children
Alicia Salinas-Sosa, Valued Youth Partnership Program
Joan Schine, Early Adolescent Helper Project
Frank Slobig, Youth Service America

The project results add to the YSA knowledge base as well as the YSA position to unequivocally advocate community service as vital to the development, education and social needs of young people in the middle grades. YSA intends this sourcebook to be used by program developers to work with communities and schools to create strategies for integrating service into the daily lives of young people. The case studies provide practical youth service program models and examples of community service activities. They also include the rationale for each program design, the pro-

gram components, the impact of the programs, program documentation and products, as well as my account of site visits to the programs. We hope that educators and other community members may discover new ways to think about young people and incorporate quality youth service programs into the core of learning for middle grade students.

Our further hope is to challenge education and youth policymakers to improve the ways in which they address educational reform and the problems young adolescents are increasingly encountering in today's society. It is critical to offer these young people positive school experiences and reasons not to drop out of school. One powerful way to retain and assist these youngsters is to develop new partnerships between community groups and schools that foster creative youth service programs. Such arrangements can fill a vital missing link or be the linchpin to learning and later success in life. YSA challenges national, state and local policymakers and administrators to revisit communities and their school systems and to evaluate how they can assist in the development of youth service programs.

Most importantly, we hope that the lessons learned from this project, the efforts and successes, will help pave the way for opportunities for all young people to begin community service activities as early as kindergarten and to continue their involvement in community service programs throughout their lives.

Catherine A. Rolzinski
YSA Director of Education

New Directions For Responding To The Needs Of Middle School Students:

Promoting Community Service

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1

Demographic, economic, social and technological changes continue to occur at a rapid rate in the United States. They bring with them increasing challenges to provide guidance and support to our nation's young people and to equip them with the necessary tools for successful development. Ominous trends have been reported repeatedly in the past few years. The number of young people in our schools diminishes each year as does the number of traditional-age students entering college. The population of minority youngsters, especially the Hispanic population, is increasing dramatically in certain states. The labor market is undergoing fundamental changes which in turn influence the ways in which we think about education. It is apparent that as we enter the final decade of the twentieth century, we are less and less certain about what kind of future is in store for our young people and what a successful life might mean for them.

Many experts examining the future of our country have made recommendations intended to improve our nation's strength and economic competitiveness through a variety of sophisticated technologies. While "hi-tech" improvements are important, we are realizing that our technological development has exceeded our human ability to accommodate the complex social consequences of such dynamic change.

Youth Service America is focusing instead on developing the "high-touch" or human capacity of our young people to prepare them to be effective citizens in an evolving society. YSA promotes opportunities for young people to meet the challenge of their own future. YSA's goal is to help our nation's youth acquire the understanding and skills necessary to respond to solutions to the social problems in their communities. In the process YSA seeks to broaden young peoples' sense of critical awareness, caring and commitment.

Youth Service In Communities

What does youth service mean? Youth service means young people engaged in service programs that are improving living conditions in their urban, suburban, and rural communities. Young people are protecting natural resources, caring for the elderly, tutoring educationally at-risk youngsters, working in homeless shelters, and much more.

Youth service answers two of society's critical needs: the need that all young people, rich and poor, have for practical experience, responsibility, self-esteem, discipline, a sense of belonging and an understanding of democratic values in action; and the need communities have for a range of valuable public and human services. Youth service program operators across the country report that youth service helps build personal character, creates a sense of shared community, and shapes our national destiny by bringing youth of all racial, class and cultural backgrounds to work together in quality service programs.

Where can we find better situated laboratories or training

grounds for young people to develop their citizenship skills than in their own communities? And, what could be a more appropriate method of understanding the deeper meaning of civic responsibility than through conscious acts of providing service?

YSA believes that community service is education and can serve as a means of learning life skills as well as serving as a bridge to learning academic coursework. Youth service programs are most effective when they are organized through collaborative relationships among a broad base of community organizations and agencies and the schools. The development of a youth service program should integrate the specific needs, traditional and emerging cultural considerations, and particular community politics within each community. Youth service programs should begin as early as kindergarten, but not later than the middle grades.

Programs should become more challenging as young people advance through their school years and continue into adulthood. YSA promotes sustained opportunities for quality youth service programs which encourage young people to develop the ethic of and commitment to service. YSA views the youth service movement in the United States as an important avenue to prepare our nation's young people to become more insightful about the needs in their communities and about how to respond as well-prepared citizens in relation to their social and physical environments.

Youth Service Meets The Developmental Needs Of Middle School Students

The *YSA 1988-1989 Education Forum On Youth Service Issues And New Directions For Middle School Programs* examined youth

service through the lens of the special developmental characteristics of students in the middle grades. Each child is different and needs to be recognized as an individual, but there are general developmental needs of young people between the ages of 10 and 15. During these transition years it seems common for behavior to vacillate between sudden bursts of maturity with a need for increased independence and swings of regression to "childish" behavior with great dependency needs. These changes are normal for youngsters of this age, who are caught in the middle between childhood and adulthood, and who are simultaneously undergoing rapid changes in physical and emotional growth.

Joan Schine, director of the Early Adolescent Helper Program, is an experienced observer of the 10-15 age developmental needs as they relate to participation in community service. Ms. Schine presented the kinds of developmental characteristics that seem to make students in the middle grades particularly receptive for involvement in youth service activities. These needs were identified as follows:

- a need for autonomy and opportunities to take risks within a context of protection and affirmation;
- a need to make a difference in community settings which can be either positively or negatively expressed;
- emergence of strong peer group affiliation, with an emphasis either on cooperation or competition;
- a need to attain competence at problem-solving in a variety of situations;
- a need to experience emotional commitment and control

of impulses during a stage of rapid body growth and mercurial emotions; and

- a search for social identity.

Young adolescents clearly benefit from community service involvement which directly supports their actual developmental needs. The *YSA Forum* case study project directors observed that the attitudes, beliefs, ambitions, social perceptions and behavior of the young participants were changed positively and in some cases transformed through participants' contributions to solving real community problems.

Developmental needs of young adolescents are met through youth service activities. Examples of these developmental needs are illuminated from the case study programs and include:

- opportunities to try a diverse array of activities in new settings and with different kinds of people,
- an increase in self-esteem,
- a deeper sense of confidence,
- a clearer sense of identity,
- a more comfortable feeling of belonging, security and trust,
- a more focused sense of purpose,
- a more developed sense of responsibility and discipline,

- an awareness of more life options and educational/career opportunities, and

- a broader perception of the larger community and world around them, and how they can function in it.

In the middle grade years peer pressures are tremendous. The projects cited many examples about how involvement in the programs helped participants develop the strength of identity to withstand negative pressures. The project also showed how the positive values from participation in the youth service programs did not exist in isolation but seemed to have "trickle-down" effects that translated to more successful behavior in social, family, and educational settings.

Youth Viewed as the Solution Instead of the Problem

> *Everybody Can Be Great, Because Everybody Can Serve.*
> Martin Luther King, Jr.

Schine recommends that participation in youth service programs be as heterogeneous as possible.

> *Service is an activity where those youth labeled "at-risk" can excel as well or better than others in their age group. Young people with different abilities can come together and find that providing service is enjoyable because they do it with their peers.*

The YSA experience with young people in the middle grades has confirmed our philosophy that all young people can serve. Not many years ago, it was generally thought that the age of those who could serve as volunteers was limited to adults, possibly college students and, in more recent times, high school students. It was also generally assumed that the more advantaged people in our society were in a more appropriate position to serve. These attitudes are not only paternalistic and limiting in terms of the groups served, but have done injustice to a great number of people from diverse backgrounds able and willing to serve.

In conducting the project YSA took special care to look for those youth service programs in which young people, who were often perceived as problems, were in positions of service providers. The objective was to get a better understanding of the implications for youth service programming for middle school students facing at-risk problems. The increasing societal problems of drugs, alcohol, crime, early pregnancy, family disruption, school drop-outs, and poverty are racing to deter our nation's young adolescents from reaching adulthood with the intellectual abilities, employability and life skills, and attitudes and values necessary to function successfully as fully developed citizens.

YSA's examination of the case-study programs clearly indicates, however, that young people in the middle grades by all standards of societal success can be successful service providers. If young people are viewed as resources or part of the solution rather than the problem, they often can be constructively engaged against difficult societal problems through well-structured programs. Numerous examples of this view of youth as resources are seen in the case studies that follow.

The Valued Youth Partnership Program

Tutoring Of
Hispanic "At-Risk" Elementary Students
By Hispanic "At-Risk" Middle School Students

San Antonio, Texas

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2

The Valued Youth Partnership Program (VYP) in San Antonio, Texas, addresses the school dropout problem through a prevention method of cross-age tutoring. It was developed by the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) and was first implemented in 1984 through funding from Coca-Cola USA. The IDRA model grew out of the challenge to find better ways to teach basic academic skills to Hispanic middle school and high school students, who have been held back in grades and who are reading two or more years below grade level. If the current performance of Hispanic students continues, the already high dropout rate will continue to soar. As reported in the 1986 IDRA studies, 55 percent to 65 percent of Hispanic students nationwide and 32 percent to 44 percent in San Antonio school districts leave school before high school graduation. Alicia Salinas-Sosa, Director of the Valued Youth Partnership Program, emphasized the urgency to implement programs that are effective intervention models for Hispanic students when she informed the Forum of the growing Hispanic population in Texas. She said,

> *Thirty percent of Texans are Hispanic and fifty percent of kindergarten students are Hispanic. In Texas 85 percent of the Hispanic school drop-outs were born in the United States.*

The guiding principle of the VYP is to identify likely school dropouts and to enable them to believe they are valued young persons. These "valued young people" are given the opportunity to make a difference by serving as tutors to younger Hispanic children identified as potential dropouts. Not only do the children in the elementary grades benefit from the tutoring, but the middle school tutors receive many benefits in return. Unlike most programs that serve "at-risk" youth, the VYP has a clear definition of "at-risk": a student performing two grade levels below satisfactory performance. This youth peer tutoring model also responds to other characteristics associated with dropout-prone students. These traits include pressing family financial needs, student underachievement in basic skills, poor or deteriorating self-concepts, high absentee rates and disciplinary problems.

Program Components

The VYP includes five major components: (1) classes for student tutors, (2) tutoring sessions, (3) field trips, (4) role modeling, and (5) parental involvement.

Classes for Student Tutors. Junior high school students receive tutor training through enrollment in an accredited course. The goals of the course are:

(a) to develop communication skills that will enable the student to become an effective tutor;

(b) to develop reading and writing skills which will enable tutors to teach these skills to those tutored;

(c) to develop practical awareness of child growth and development theories which are central to the tutoring activity.

Tutoring Sessions. Tutoring activities involve five to eight hours per week, and tutors receive the federal minimum wage for all tutoring activities. The tutoring sesions take place at the elementary schools that are located closest to the host junior high school. This enables tutors to walk to the elementary schools and ensures that tutors will contribute tutoring services within their own community. The tutoring may occur during a regular classroom session or following school hours. A designated person is responsible for security after school.

Field Trips. Exposure to a variety of economic and cultural opportunities in the broader community is considered an important part of the VYP. The field trips also provide an opportunity for the junior high and elementary students to strengthen their tutoring relationship through more diverse types of interactions.

Role Modeling. Adults from the school district who represent a variety of professions serve as speakers to the VYP. They include professors, doctors, judges, attorneys, school board members, city council members, artists, singers, school principals, business executives and members of Congress. These sessions allow tutors to see successful community people up close, and give the youngsters role models to emulate.

Family Involvement. Understanding and support from the family and parents are crucial to the success of the tutoring experience. There is at least one meeting with families to explain the program and to win their support. Families are urged to encourage their children to remain in school. A home visit is

also made by the teacher to the home of the tutor. Issues that grow out of these meetings can be the focus of parent meetings. Parent meetings are scheduled every three months and involve VYP staff, school representatives and parents. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure that families understand the importance of the VYP Program; to respond to parents' questions and family concerns; and to engage families to support and encourage their children's participation in the program.

Site Visit Observations

Antonio Olivares Elementary School, pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, and Kazen Middle School, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades, are in the same neighborhood. Kazen students walk over to Antonio Olivares Elementary School and tutor Mondays through Fridays. The tutors themselves attend training sessions on Fridays. During my visit to Kazen and Antonio Olivares Schools, I had the opportunity to talk to teachers and students from both schools while the tutoring was in progress. Since I had heard many positive things about the program, I asked the teachers to share any problems they experienced with the program. This is what they had to say.

Louise Gaitanos, teacher coordinator and English-As-A-Second-Language (ESL) teacher, Kazen Middle School:

> *We became involved in the program in 1985. In the beginning we had some problems dealing with scheduling. Now ttutoring is given during PE and conference times at Kazen. The school principal selects the teacher coordinator and the teacher co-*

ordinator determines the lesson plans that the tutors will be using. The tutors are treated as adults. For example, they are called Mr. and Miss.

Victor Ortiz, teacher coordinator, Antonio Olivares School:

There are 500 students in my school and many of them need help of one kind or another. In the first year of the program there was some problem with the screening of tutors. We recognized that part of the program was to utilize "at-risk" middle school students as the tutors, but we were getting some with problems with the criminal justice system. Out of concern for our students we had to strengthen the screening process to try to weed these students out.

Antonio Olivares School: Third-Grade Classroom

Nicholas, third grader, in a one-to-one tutoring session at the back of the classroom during class:

My tutor helps me study and read. If I have problems in definitions he can help me. I learn more, so I can be whatever I want to be. I am learning the words I need for what I want to be when I grow up.

Oscar, Nicholas' tutor from Kazen Middle School:

I help them learn and I learn myself. Some of the things I didn't understand in the third grade, I am really learning now.

Christine, third-grade student at Antonio Olivares:

He helps me with my spelling and makes me feel comfortable.

Albert, Christine's seventh-grade tutor from Kazen:

I come over second period and help them learn spelling, math and reading. I like teaching them. It's easier than I thought and fun. If you like kids, you want them to learn. I feel like a brother.

Antonio Olivares School: First Grade Classroom

Veronica, age 13, student at Kazen and tutor to Darlene and Marielle:

I like it because I can help other kids, and I can learn new things. I do this during second period. I like getting paid for teaching in this class.

Darlene, age six, first-grade student at Antonio Olivares:

I'm going to be a tutor when I'm older.

Marielle, age seven, first-grade student at Antonio Olivares:

She helps me and I like her.

First grade teacher at Antonio Olivares Elementary School:

In different ways I've heard the tutors tell me, "Now

I know why teachers tell me what they tell me. Now I know how teachers feel." Tutoring seems like self-therapy. Because these students are a higher risk group, society looks down on them. This is a way they can make a contribution between the world of adults and primary students.

Collier Elementary School

Tutoring sessions were not in progress during my visit to Collier Elementary School, but I discussed the program with school administrators and teachers. At Collier there are 360 tutees and 120 tutors, and here are some of the comments about the program.

Rudolfo Torres, Principal:

The tutoring has gotten to be such an important part of the school that it is hard to imagine operating without it.

Margarita Madrid, Academic Coordinator, Collier Elementary School:

Some of the tutors are former students here. The main uniqueness is the response of the children. The tutors are also learning because they need to know

the material in order to teach. The younger kids see them as big brothers. They look up to them and feel close. The older kids feel needed and that they are contributing.

Ms. Nepveaux, first grade bi-lingual teacher, Collier Elementary School:

> *The children lacked readiness skills. They had particular problems with letter recognition and sounds. Now, out of twenty tutored students, all but five know their letters. Another problem the tutors have been a great help with is the concept of subtraction. The children are not intimidated. They feel familiar and get real close right away. They develop affection and get real attached. The tutors have been polite, disciplined, very careful and help evaluate students.*

Impact

In the third year of operation, the 1986-87 school year, the Valued Youth Partnership Program was implemented in one middle school in Edgewood, two in South San Antonio and one in the Harlandale school district as well as in the high schools in Edgewood and South San Antonio.

An internal evaluation was conducted by the Research and Evaluation Division of IDRA. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the implementation and the impact of the program activities on the student participants. The impact on the dropout rate was of particular concern because the rate for Hispanic students in Texas was running at a high 45 percent. During the 1986-87 school year 460 elementary students in the program were served by 153 middle school and high school tutors. Of these tutors only three dropped out of school. Over the three-year-period the evaluators found the dropout rate among tutors to be a low four percent.

Attitudes toward home were charted in three major categories: improved relations with parents and adults, improved relations with siblings, and improved family responsibility. Student tutors commented that they were able to help their families by buying their own clothes, having their own spending money, helping to pay bills, and being more responsible. Their participation in the program had helped them feel a sense of independence in earning their own spending money. Their work attitudes improved as they learned the importance of responsible work as well as their employment possibilities. Improved self-esteem was the most commonly expressed benefit.

Teacher surveys gathered positive results on specific aspects of students' school life. Analysis of the quantitative data of third-year participants indicated a demonstrated improvement in English and mathematics. About three-fourths of the students were absent two days or less per six-week period during the school year. Disciplinary action referrals for such offenses as being tardy and skipping classes were low at the beginning of the year and became nonexistent for the third through sixth grading periods.

Many teachers observed an improved attitude toward school by the tutors as well as more respect toward tutors from their peers. Several teachers noted that tutors had a greater sense of worth, more self-confidence and that tutors had become more open and outgoing. Other teachers noticed these kinds of traits being passed down to the elementary students as the tutors became their role models. Teachers also observed that tutors seemed to be more responsible, tutors looked forward to helping the younger students, and many tutors expressed an interest in becoming teachers. Other teachers commented on examples of improvements in the confidence and appearance of the tutors. Overall, the teachers appreciated the extra

help that the tutors provided.

Recommendations from the teachers to improve the program included the following: screen tutors better, improve orientation by the teachers, ensure timely arrival of tutors, extend the tutoring time and number of tutors. Dr. Salinas-Sosa states,

> *We need to devote more attention on developing the parent-involvement component. We are also always looking at ways to improve and provide better training to the teachers. We want more variety in our speakers as role models. We feel it is very important to keep the minimum wage component as a symbol of the worth of the tutoring as well as the difference it makes in the students' ability to participate in the program with the different economic pressures in their families.*

The tutors provided the following significant comments:

> *Tutoring helps me come to school because I have to come and teach the kids. I don't miss too many days because the students ask me where I've been, and tell me that they miss me. Every time I'm absent, like last week, they asked me, 'Where were you'? I really like those kids. If I hadn't been a tutor, I would have missed more school.*

> *I've been teaching Jose. His grades are going up. Now he's going to pass. Because I helped him his grades went up. The same happened to two other kids last year. Because I helped them, they passed.*

Institutionalization

The Coca-Cola funding ended at the close of the 1987-88 school year. The school districts were forced to be creative and find local and federal funds to continue the Valued Youth Partnership Program. They have done so on a school to school basis within the three school districts in San Antonio.

A major source of funding to continue the VYP Program within the San Antonio school districts was through Chapter II Funding, Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988, Subpart 3 — Local Targeted Assistance Programs. Commu-

nity service is included in one of the six targeted assistance programs as follows, "programs designed to enhance personal excellence of students and student achievement, including instruction in ethics, performing and creative arts, humanities, activities in physical fitness and comprehensive health education, and participation in community service projects." Local education agencies apply for Chapter II funding through their state standard application process.

Replication Potential

From my talks with all levels of people participating in the VYP Program, it is clear that its continuation is dependent on locally generated funding which must be attracted by the merits of the program. A strong credibility factor for future funding and replication lies in the very careful documentation of the program's broad success in addressing the significant problem of Hispanic school dropouts. As important as the VYP Program is to San Antonio, the replicability potential seems to be enormous especially in the Southwest. National demographics also indicate that Hispanics will be the majority population in five states by the close of the century. Another stage of replication that should be considered is how the VYP Program model could be adapted to the needs of other special populations, such as for Native Americans and recent immigrant groups.

Documentation/Products

The VYP Program has had a strong documentation component that has evolved and has been refined since its inception in 1984. In addition to internal evaluations by the IDRA Research and Evaluation Division, a strong set of orientation and tracking instruments was designed and improved over the years of program operation.

These instruments include:

- VYP profile forms, information letter to the parents with parent consent forms.
- Profiles of the tutored students' grades over the six week grading periods.
- Data collection forms to measure pre/post scholastic achievement percentiles and team percentages mastered in reading, math and writing skills.
- Data collection forms to measure attendance, grades, and pre/post-self conceptions.
- Disciplinary action review six-week forms.
- Teacher, teacher coordinator, parent, and student surveys.
- *Valued Youth Partnerships: Programs in Caring Handbook* (contains copies of the following forms).

EXHIBIT A

VYP Information Guide For Student Tutors

1. What will my job be?

- You will serve as student tutors of younger students who are having difficulty with their school work.
- Tutors will work one hour a day and be paid minimum wage.
- We recommend that tutors work primarily with 3-4 students. Students receiving tutoring should be students who are having difficulty with their work assignments.
- The focus of the tutoring would be strengthening of the basic skills of reading, spelling, English and mathematics.

2. Why get involved?

- You'll be helping someone who really needs your help.
- You will also learn by teaching others — about the subject matter and about yourself! Don't forget that approximately every two weeks you will receive compensation for your efforts (a nice check).

3. What kinds of things will I be expected to do?

- A tutor is above all things a helper. You are to guide students in completing their daily assignments of learning tasks. You can show them how to do something; for example, you can show them how to add two numbers or how to form the plural of a word. After modeling the completion of the task, you can tell them how you did it or summarize your steps.

- One of the best ways of helping young students is to listen to them read or to read to them.

4. How will I know what to do, where to begin?

- Ask the teacher to whom you are assigned to please tell you how you can best help him/her and the students. It is best if you follow a routine or schedule. It is also wise that you receive a copy. Follow the routine consitently and soon your tutees will learn it also.

EXHIBIT B

General Guidelines For Tutors:

1. Make a regular time commitment.
2. Be punctual.
3. Ask the teacher how you can help.
4. Keep confidential information to yourselves.
5. Hold a positive regard for tutees.
6. Remember you are a model for your tutees.
7. When in doubt, ask.
8. Good communication skills are essential to good working conditions.
9. Use positive language.

Teaching Practices That Work For Tutors:

1. Get the attention of students before starting.
2. Tell students what they are going to learn. Explain to them why it's important to learn it.
3. Provide clear information. List steps involved. Show students how to do it. Draw pictures if necessary or use concrete objects.
4. Ask students questions to check if they understand what they have to do and how to do it.
5. Watch as they work and catch misunderstandings early.
6. Provide praise related to their work. Be specific.

7. Provide extra practice using games to make sure students have mastered the skills.
8. When students make a mistake, be kind. Find something good to mention and provide hints or clues to help them.
9. If they still don't get it, tell them the steps to follow.

PROJECT OASES:

A Combined Academic/Community Alternative For Potential Drop-Outs

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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Occupational Academic Skills for the Employment of Students (OASES) is a program that has been operating in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania since 1982. OASES is an alternative school program within the Pittsburgh Public School System and is funded by the school district. Eighth-grade potential dropouts are engaged in a highly structured and disciplined school program which divides the day between academic classes and OASES classes. The purpose of OASES is to provide the student who has "turned off" school with a means of receiving occupational and academic skills for employment. Students are able to see direct meaning between learning and community improvement.

OASES information packets include the following quote:

> *Let no one be discouraged by the belief that there is nothing that one man or one woman can do against the enormous array of the world's ills, against misery, ignorance, injustice, and violence. Few will have the greatness to bend history itself; but each of us can work to change a single portion of life's events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up*

for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

Robert F. Kennedy

The OASES eighth-grade students have tasted much "of the world's ills" that Senator Kennedy mentioned by the time they have dropped out of school. Some OASES students are older than the norm for the eighth grade, often fifteen or sixteen. It is common for them to be carrying the scars of prostitution, drugs, teen pregnancies and the criminal justice system. Of the Pittsburgh School District's 40,000 students, more than half are from minority groups; 87 percent qualify for free or reduced-cost lunches; the cumulative dropout rate is 27 percent; one in ten teenage girls becomes pregnant; more than half of the black males ages 16 to 21 are unemployed; and a quarter of the white students and half of the black students fall below the national average in reading. Poor attitudes, lack of self esteem, and lack of interest in school contribute to the tendency of these students to have high absenteeism, low academic achievement and frequent placement in school suspension. OASES offers these young people another chance to succeed. This alternative school program kindles its own opportunities "to improve the lot of others and send forth a ripple of hope," as Robert F. Kennedy urged.

OASES is a classroom and community centered program designed to motivate eighth grade-students who have not responded

well to traditional education programs. The OASES design is based on the concept that education should be made relevant to students not only by teaching skills for future employment, but also by enabling students to apply what has been learned in a work situation. Many young people need this kind of immediate application. They need to see direct benefits from what they have learned. This reinforces the learning experience and makes it meaningful to them.

OASES Centers began in Pittsburgh in four pilot middle schools: Allegheny, Frick, Knoxville and Milliones. In 1988, OASES Centers were added at Greenway and Reizenstein Middle Schools, and in 1989 at Arsenal and Prospect Middle Schools. There are now eight OASES projects in the Pittsburgh Middle Schools. Individualized instruction is important to OASES' success with its students, so classes are kept small. Approximately 13 students are in each of both morning and afternoon classes.

Program Components

A Typical Student Day

The students are assigned a flexible schedule that includes:

Academics (three periods): Math, Reading, Language Arts
Physical Education (one period)
OASES lab (three periods): Safety, School Projects, Community Projects
Evaluation

Program Goals. OASES seeks to instill a positive attitude in students about themselves and their work. Positive peer relation-

ships and pride in accomplishments are encouraged.

Selection Process. The students selected to participate in the OASES Program are those students who are not functioning academically or behaviorally at acceptable standards in school and are considered at-risk of dropping out of school. The seventh-grade teaching staff does a preliminary screening, evaluation, and referral according to a Student Selection and Placement Criteria check sheet. See Exhibit B for the Project OASES/Student Selection and Placement Criteria form. Candidates undergo a final review by the dean, counselor, and principal who select from among those students the faculty believe will most benefit from the OASES experience.

Placement Process. Recommendations for placement are made by teachers and deans subject to final approval by the principals. Placement also requires consent of the parents. A contract is signed by the student, parent, principal, dean and teacher, lending a conscious commitment by all who sign. Each dean maintains a placement list, updates it throughout the school year, and admits students as openings occur.

Occupational Orientation. OASES begins with an eight-week occupational orientation experience at the home school. Small hand tools are provided and participants are taught basic skills, such as home maintenance in an industrial arts workshop. OASES is scheduled three periods a day. The remaining periods are devoted to academics, physical education and career-orientation conferences.

Work Experience/Community Service Projects. The work experience in community service projects follows the orientation period. Community projects are done for local nonprofit organizations in Pittsburgh. Projects include many kinds of improvements. Stu-

dents may build flower boxes to beautify a run-down neighborhood or construct access ramps for the handicapped.

Transportation. OASES has six vans to take its teams to and from community work sites. Each van is equipped with portable equipment and sufficient seating for students.

Performance Evaluation. Students are evaluated on academic and OASES performance each report period. OASES teachers and counselors discuss progress with each student, giving praise for accomplishments and stressing areas of improvement. Participants who have shown neither progress nor potential are referred to the principal for further review and possible removal from the program. Students are encouraged to share the OASES experience with their families. Throughout each report period the OASES teacher advises parents of their child's improvement or lack of it, so that families may encourage or praise them.

Publicity and Promotion. Public relations is an integral part of the curriculum. Each school is provided with a camera to record the sequence of OASES construction projects for display purposes upon completion of community projects. Other promotional vehicles are: the school newspaper, newsletter, community meetings, community newspapers, TV news coverage, and letters of appreciation. Whenever an OASES project begins, publicity about the program is visible around the community with large attractive on-site construction signs posted. These signs remain after completion to acknowledge the contribution to the community.

Awards Program. Each school year, OASES students participate in an awards assembly to honor and reward outstanding achievement. The ceremony rotates among participating OASES schools.

Awards and Criteria. The awards and the achievements are:

- Jogging outfit = honor roll for a report period.
- Sweatshirt = perfect attendance (excuse absences permitted) for a report period.
- T-shirt = no suspensions or in-house for a report period.
- Trophy/Prize = outstanding OASES student.

Local merchants donate most of the special prizes. Other incentives include field trips for OASES classes to participate as teams in activities or site visits within Pittsburgh to broaden their horizons. OASES students who reach 16 years of age and remain in school are given preference for employment in the school districts Select Employment Training Program.

Program Outcomes. OASES now has a demonstrated record of success. Students stay in school. Academic performance is improved. Parents support the program. Students carry their improved skills into their home lives. Pittsburgh residents accept OASES students as valuable resources to the unmet needs in their communities.

Site Visit Observations

Large numbers of urban school drop-out prone underachievers who are at risk of becoming unemployable remain. For more than 20 years, Dr. Fred A. Monaco, Director of Career and Vocational Education in the Pittsburgh Public Schools, has struggled to ameliorate this problem. He sees vocational education as the heart of the OASES intervention strategy. He believes that the learning of mar-

ketable skills, together with the sense of accomplishment which accompanies such learning, can help students overcome at-risk factors. Dr. Monaco also believes that the at-risk problems, as manifested in the behavior traits listed in the OASES selection criteria, should not be left to the schools alone. He sees the quest for solutions as a community-wide concern. Dr. Monaco has been calling for and receiving the wide-scale collaboration of students, teachers, administrators, parents, youth advocates, business people and others. He says that all must work together to overcome the community's problem of young adolescents not succeeding in school.

In a discussion with Dr. Monaco about the current popular term, "at-risk," as applied to problems faced by young people today, he observed:

> *In the sixties "at-risk" would have been a label based more on financial consideration, but lots of poor kids were doing well. Today income is not the only consideration with about 97 percent of all students fitting some definition of "at-risk" because of all of the other factors involving drugs, early pregnancy, the criminal justice system, family problems and school drop-outs.*

Dr. Monaco cited the job training skills of vocational education as one of the most effective tools to counter problems relating to dropping out of school. He said the success of vocational and academic students far exceeds that of students in the general education track within the school system. His analysis of the tracking system and the respective results of the various tracks has prompted him to assess the general education track as a failure. Dr. Monaco was a

leader in the country by succeeding in his recommendation to eliminate the general track in the Pittsburgh School District. He has concentrated on the OASES Program in middle schools and devised different vocational education programs to strengthen those factors that help young people succeed in high school.

Al Markowski, Supervisory Instructional Specialist, is responsible for coordinating the OASES programs within the eight Pittsburgh middle schools. Markowski states:

> *Community service is not a threat to teaching staff if it is not introduced as something new, but as something complementary and reinforcing so students can learn better, be motivated, and find meaning in what they do at school. Presented in this way a program like OASES is not a threat. And there is great potential to tie in so many disciplines.*

Allegheny Middle School

There is an enrollment of 900 students at Allegheny Middle School and 25 of them were enrolled in the OASES program at the time of my visit. Allegheny has an academic and a technical building. The OASES Project is housed in the basement of the technical building. There is a construction lab adjacent to the OASES classroom. The industrial technology and resource room is on the first floor.

Thomas Borgo, the Industrial Technology and OASES teacher at Allegheny, is a high energy, enthusiastic and engaging person. With obvious pride he carefully guided me through the classroom. He showed me large individual poster boards he had prepared with

pictures he took to chronicle the different stages of the community service projects of his students. He also showed me the class attendance and grading charts. Both sets of displays suggested serious participation by students interested in earning project rewards and continuing in the OASES Project.

The comments of the Allegheny OASES students attested to the high value placed on the OASES rewards of fashionable clothing and field trips. Many Fridays are set aside for the entire class (except those students under suspension or sometimes near suspension) to go on field trips. The Friday trips also encourage the students to build their team spirit through different activities and expand their horizons by going to parts of the community that most of them have never experienced.

I asked Mr. Borgo to share some examples of negative as well as positive experiences from his three years with OASES students, and his response was:

> *Well, one of my students is suspended because he stabbed another student with a brad pusher (a shop tool), and he swore at the dean on the phone. Many of the students here have stolen cars or been in the court system. On the other hand, one of my students made a 180-degree turnaround. He had 90+ absences last year, 50 percent of his time was unexcused absences from school. Now he is coming regularly, and he told me he used to be turned off to school.*

My visit to Allegheny Middle School coincided with part of the OASES laboratory period. The students were creating beautiful

jewelry boxes in the construction laboratory. The boxes were to be sold at a community fundraising event. I took this occasion to talk with many of the students. The following are vignettes of what I learned about what the OASES Project meant to students.

Michael, age 15:

Last year I built a ramp for a man in a wheel chair in Manchester, and it really made me feel good.... If we help the community, people feel more like going places. If our work looks nice, they won't be messing it up.... It really motivates you to go to school. Last year I had bad grades. This year they have been good. It gives me incentive to come to school.

Kari, age 13:

It's great being able to work with this stuff. You learn how to make roofs and stuff. If I ever want to paint or fix my house, I don't need a guy.... Last year my attendance was bad. I was bored. Now I've earned a sweatshirt. I know I'm smart, I just wasn't using it.... We built a nature trail that helps kids learn, and we built flower boxes to make a part of town look better.

Randy, age 16:

Last year I missed 40 days and this year I've missed only six in the first report. I'm trying real hard for a sweatsuit.... It's a good education and helps kids stay in school. Some keep out of trouble. We learn

better and have a chance to make things for our

families.... It helps our community — like the ramps we made for the crippled people. We also built an outdoor school with benches to help kids study nature.

Alicia, age 13:

I like it because you can make things and be with other people and go to other schools and meet people.... We made a nature trail for classes outside for elementary students.... Mother was glad that I knew something she didn't — like the model house we built. Mother was surprised by the clock I made her for Christmas.... Some kids have other programs, but this is all I have. I missed a lot of school last year. I have better attendance this year, and I like working here.

Michael, age 13:

I like making stuff. We do so many things here. I asked to be here.

John, age 14:

This is good because I can leave the classroom and don't have to do just pencil work. Last year I missed at least eight days a report.... I wanted to learn cabinetry.... We built a picnic area for an organization to use.

Ernest T. Williams Community Center

After my visit to the Allegheny Middle School I went to the Ernest T. Williams Community Center in North View Heights, a predominantly black neighborhood in Pittsburgh. The Director of Education of the Center, Alice Carter, told me about the "angry years" when a youth was killed in the neighborhood over mistaken identity and how the Center was named after him. Dr. Carter told me about the financial difficulties of operating the Center's community programs which benefit the underserved youth between the ages of three and twenty.

Dr. Carter was most grateful for the work provided by the OASES students. She had a number of stories to tell about how the students worked together and how she observed their personalities and behavior. She spoke enthusiastically about OASES' good works and led me through the wooded grounds surrounding the Center. There were tables and benches built by OASES students and nature trails laid out by them. The area had been made into an outdoor classroom for elementary school children to learn about science and nature.

Like all completed OASES projects, this one was prominently acknowledged. A large attractive sign on the grounds of the Ernest T. Williams Center near the entrance to the nature trail gives credit to the Project OASES young people who constructed it and lists their three participating middle schools.

Impact

The retention of students in the OASES Program represents real

holding power and improvement each year. Evaluation findings from the early years of the program indicate students completing the eighth grade and continuing to high school as follows:

	1982-1983		1983-1984		1984-1985	
School	Enrollment	Remain/Depart	Enrollment	Remain/Depart	Enrollment	Remain/Depart
Allegheny			16	6/10	26	21/5
Frick	27	14/13	25	21/4	24	22/2
Knoxville			22	17/5	22	20/2
Milliones	17	6/11	23	16/7	22	22/0

The preliminary evaluation findings of the OASES Middle Schools compare student performance of OASES students with students referred, but not yet in the program.

From the end of the seventh grade to the first marking period of the eighth grade, the following observations were made:

Passing grades in reading - OASES students 74 percent, referrals 28 percent.

Passing grades in Mathematics - OASES students 55 percent, referrals 31 percent.

From the end of the seventh grade to the second marking period of the eighth grade:

Maintaining or improving passing grades in reading - OASES students 73 percent, referrals 30 percent.

Maintaining or improving passing grades in math - OASES 58 percent, referrals 43 percent.

Contrasting the performance from the first marking period to the second marking period of the 8th grade:

Maintaining or improving passing grades in reading - OASES 68 percent, referrals 44 percent.

Maintaining or improving passing grades in math - OASES 61 percent, referrals 44 percent.

In the remaining subject areas, fewer students were enrolled in the OASES program; however, the number of OASES students who maintained or improved their passing grades in these subjects still exceeded the number of referral students in comparison.

Attendance. At eighth grade mid-year, 84 percent of the OASES students improved their attendance from the seventh grade in comparison with 48 percent of the referral students.

Tardiness. There were 76 percent of the OASES students who were more punctual by eighth grade mid-year matched with 64 percent of the students in the referral group.

Suspensions. The suspension rate for eighth grade mid-year was less than half the number of days suspended in seventh grade for OASES students, while 79 percent of the referral students lessened days suspended.

Race and Sex. Minority characterization for the OASES group was 62 percent compared to the referral students' 59 percent. Sixty-six percent of the students in the OASES group were male compared to 82 percent in the referral group.

Institutionalization

Unlike the Valued Youth Partnership Program, OASES was not confronted by the need to successfully bridge the gap from "soft money" to institutional funding or going from the "margin to the mainstream." Project OASES was conceived and implemented through the Pittsburgh Public School System through the Division

of Occupational, Vocational, and Technical Education and is funded by the school district. Initial funding was supplemented by local private foundations and a Chapter II Block grant.

Replication Potential

A *Course of Study: Introduction To Project OASES* has been compiled by the Department of Curriculum and Program Management under the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education and an excerpt from the foreword of the document follows:

> *Project OASES offers the student who has been next-to-impossible to motivate through the means accessible in the conventional classroom a chance to experience a positive degree of success through various activity-centered projects. Project OASES is not a trade or vocational experience designed to channel the student toward a specific trade. Instead, OASES is an exploratory skills program through which the student may be instilled with a personal pride of accomplishment to be transferred to the normal school environment, thus bridging the alienation gap which existed prior to the program.*

Using this excerpt as a guiding principle, the potential of OASES for replication and adaptation to other school settings and with other coursework seems limitless. All public schools are faced with the problem of how to address "the student who is next-to-impossible to motivate." OASES may be only the first stage of school-based community service in the Pittsburgh middle schools. Mr.

Markowski is pushing the idea that the OASES model is feasible for academic as well as vocational coursework. He believes that community service is not a threat or incongruent with academic curriculum, if it is presented as reinforcing and complementary to the academic courses. He thinks that the OASES approach in academic teaching is the next stage to develop, and that it could also serve as a prevention measure to the drop-out prone students.

Documentation/Products

The administrators, staff and faculty have taken great care since 1982 to evaluate, refine, improve and document the experience of

Project OASES. The documentation of Project OASES will greatly assist other school districts to consider the merit of this type of program for their schools. The *Course of Study: Introduction To Project OASES* contains detailed information about all of the components of the program, and a comprehensive description of the construction elements involved in such projects as: Tool Box, Courtroom Project, Wall Shelf Student Motivation Project, Umbrella Table and Benches Fundraising Project. Also included are copies of all of the actual forms utilized in Project OASES. Following are two forms, the Project OASES Student Selection and Placement Criteria and the OASES Contract.

EXHIBIT C

PROJECT OASES STUDENT SELECTION AND PLACEMENT CRITERIA

Student School Date

____ is frequently absent

____ is a prospective school dropout.

____ has been nonresponsive to traditional methods in education.

____ is frequently assigned to the In-House and Out-of-School Suspension Programs.

____ is presently achieving below academic expectations or grade level.

____ displays mistrust, poor basic academic skills.

____ shows little or no interest in school.

____ does not adapt well to mainstream educational programs.

____ feels powerless to correct his/her situation.

____ withdraws from demanding situations.

____ relies on short-range goals based on immediate rewards, not allowing for planned resolution of problems.

____ is readily affected by family and personal problems, thus influencing his/her ability to achieve.

____ responds well to hands-on experiences.

____ has shown an interest in the building trades.

____ has indicated the desire for a fresh start in a new school learning setting.

Principal Approval

PLEASE NOTE: This information is confidential.

EXHIBIT D

OASES CONTRACT

I, _____, am being considered for the school year. This requires that I remain in the program throughout the school year. I agree to the following terms:

1. I will be on time and attend all my classes.
2. I will improve my grades by at least one letter grade during the next report period.
3. I will conduct myself in such a manner that I will not be assigned to suspension.
4. I will cooperate with and follow directions given by the OASES teacher, the OASES assistant, and other teachers in the building.
5. I will use my time in a productive manner when in class and will complete assignments given to me by all teachers.
6. I will not leave the classroom or job site without the teacher's permission.
7. I will practice acceptable safety habits and use eye protective devices and safety equipment prescribed by the teacher.

This contract will be reviewed regularly. If I have not fulfilled the conditions above I will be removed from the OASES Program and returned to my regularly scheduled classes.

_____ Student	_____ Date
_____ Parent	_____ Date
_____ Principal	_____ Date
_____ Dean	_____ Date
_____ OASES Teacher	_____ Date

Clean and Green

A Program That Helps To Keep Middle School Young People From Being Recruited Into Gangs

Los Angeles, California

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The Clean and Green project was launched in April 1988 by the Los Angeles Mayor's office as an attempt to counteract the early recruitment of young adolescents into gangs. Clean and Green offered young people the alternative of useful summer activities and work cleaning and beautifying the city. Budgeted at $1.1 million, the program began in summer of 1988 and was operated by the Los Angeles Conservation Corps. The program idea was to organize junior high school students into teams to clean up their neighborhoods, paint over graffiti, and plant greenery. Team building was emphasized in the Clean and Green design to encourage a sense of belonging and pride in the communities where the young people lived and attended school.

Initial recruitment for Clean and Green was done by career counselors in the junior high schools in each of the 15 council districts in Los Angeles. Each school was asked to refer 30 students. This amounted to 600-700 referrals. The LA Conservation Corps staff followed up by going to the schools and screening the applications. Priority was based on the size of the school as well as the amount and type of work needed in each community. Ultimately, 300 participants were chosen. There was an extremely rapid turnaround time between the conception of the program, the enrollment of the students and the recruiting/training of the team

leaders. By July the team leaders had visited the home of each participant and explained the program to his or her family.

There were 30 teams with 10 participants on each team. About sixty percent of the participants were boys and about 40 percent girls. Each team consisted of eight junior high school students and two high school students. Team leaders were usually college students. Crew members were paid on three levels: junior-high school participants $4.25 per hour, high school assistant crew leaders $4.50 per hour, and crew leaders $5.00 per hour. Trucks or vans were rented for each crew.

Project priorities centered around community-initiated activities involving clean-up of trash clogging gutters, alleys and streets. Participants planted trees and shrubbery and painted over graffiti. The Clean and Green participants were assigned to projects consisting of 24 hours of work per week for eight weeks. The schedule was six hours per day for four days. On Fridays from 1:00 to 2:30 participants were engaged in an education program.

Though initiated as a summer program, Clean and Green program operators are continuing to build upon its success throughout the school year. Students from John Adams Junior High School, located across the street from the Los Angeles Conservation Corps offices, were involved with the Corps before the inception of the Clean and Green Program. The enrollment at John Adams Junior High School is 1600 and 97 percent of the students are Hispanic. The students involved in the pre-Clean and Green Program were around 13 years of age and voluntarily came over to the LA Conservation Corps office for a 10 hour-per-week, education-related after-school program. The long term relationship and close proximity betweeen the Corps offices and John Adams Junior High School

made it feasible to design extended year-round Clean and Green pilot programs.

Program Components

The Clean and Green program components are as follows:

"Hands-On" Experience in Conservation, Restoration, and Recycling. The purpose is to obtain a sense of trash make-up through knowledge of where trash fits into the system of human life and through appreciation of the texture of objects. Such understanding assists Clean and Green participants in surveying the community attitudes for ways to develop better trash disposal alternatives.

Examination and Documentation of Conditions in the City. Participants document the trash conditions in communities. Reports are prepared with suggestions from community and Clean and Green participants and are presented to the city to improve the cleaning and greening of Los Angeles.

Preservation of the Earth. Clean and Green participants plant trees and other greenery. The greening activities are examples to others of the importance of caring for the planet.

Preparation of a Final Report to the District Representatives. Participants prepare comprehensive reports to district representatives at the completion of projects. These reports include statistical information on work accomplished, community needs for better cleaning and greening, and individual stories. The reports relate the participant experiences in creative ways such as drawings and poetry.

Self-Reflection. The young people reflect on the work accomplished from their individual perspective as well as from being team members. Participants devote a minimum of one hour per week to respond creatively to such questions as "What do I do that makes me a conservationist? A citizen? An expert? A community leader? An employee?"

Site Visit Observations

I visited Clean and Green toward the end of its first summer of operation. Martha Diepenbrock, Director of the LA Conservation Corps, explained the program and its genesis in great detail. She stressed the degree of the challenge dealt to her and her staff, when they learned in April 1988 about the city funds they would receive and their charge to have a new Los Angeles-wide junior high school program operational by summer.

The ability of Ms. Diepenbrock to meet this challenge was based largely on the strong agency linkages and city contacts made through the solid work of her staff operating the LA Conservation Corps. Previous to Clean and Green the experience of the LA Conservation Corps had been primarily working with corps members between the ages of 18 and 23 and with the neighboring John Adams Junior High School. This experience served as the base on which the Clean and Green design was built.

The tri-focus of the Clean and Green participants was carried out through the education component, which called for crew members to rotate each week around the roles of accountants/historians, community investigators, interviewers and archivists. Part of the task of the weekly roles was to deliver written and verbal reports

during the Friday meetings specifically scheduled for this purpose. My visit to the LA Conservation Corps office coincided with the reporting of six teams of seventh, eighth and ninth graders from John Adams Junior High School. They provided a great deal of "show and tell" about their experiences. They were very proud of their special T-shirts. Here is what some of them had to say.

Raphael, archivist, introduced his report by showing a map representing surveys taken in the neighborhood:

> *We worked about five hours a day. At 7:00 in the morning we did physical training. Then we had a community meeting or did art work. And, then we got our hard hats and our equipment and went to work. At 10:00 we took a 10 to 15 minute break. At 12:00 we got a half hour lunch break. Then we worked again until 1:45 and then went back to the center and had a meeting. At 2:00 we were dismissed. We pruned trees, took graffiti off walls, and took surveys to businesses and to people around the community. We met once a week to show the larger group what we had done.*

Eduardo, community investigator:

> *We learned a lot about safety tips and shared this information with some people in the community. We asked businesses if they would like us to paint over the graffiti on their buildings.*

Lubia, interviewer:

I asked a lot of people, 'What does it mean?' I talked to a lot of people in the community and the kids in my crew, too. I learned that my work is a valuable experience. I'm learning that to take care of trees is like taking care of babies, but they don't cry.

Ernesto, interviewer:

I went to businesses and asked managers if they had time to answer questions. If they did I asked them questions about trash and cleaning up the area and then I said, thank you.

Arturo, accountant/historian:

I counted the number of trash bags we used and the number of trees we planted. I also interviewed passer-bys and asked them how they liked our work. Sometimes they asked me about our T-shirts and I told them we clean our community, and that we are a junior conservation corps program that helps keep kids off the streets.

After hearing the John Adams Junior High School reports, I visited a community project where crew members were cleaning up the grounds around a library. When they were taking a break, I took the opportunity to talk with some of the crew members. I particularly remember two conversations that involved the subject of

gangs. After I brought up the subject, one crew member told me that it was common in his neighborhood for gang members to try to recruit 10-year-olds to work for the gangs to "run drugs." He followed up by telling me that one good thing about being kept busy in Clean and Green was that it prevented gang members from bothering him. Another perspective of the gang situation was shared by a crew member who was also a gang member. He was able to meet the expectations of Clean and Green and his gang and keep a delicate balance between the two worlds. I had the impression that Clean and Green might become his escape hatch from the gang.

The Clean And Green Curriculum

Despite the limited amount of time she had to organize the Clean and Green program, Ms. Diepenbrock insisted on including a strong education component into the program design. Besides devising an appropriate content for the education component, another of Ms. Diepenbrock's requirements was that the curriculum have a clear structure. Crew leaders had to be able to grasp the curriculum and quickly adapt it to their individual styles in order to comfortably instruct their crews.

Experts in youth service and leadership development, job-skills training and career development, the environment and conservation, and literacy and English proficiency were solicited for assistance to develop the curriculum model. A taskforce was formed to intensively build the components of the curriculum. The staff of the Constitutional Rights Foundation in Los Angeles have considerable experience in curriculum design for high school youth service programs and were particularly helpful. A comprehensive and well-

structured curriculum was completed. Crew leaders were taken on three-day overnight training sessions to learn the curriculum and to develop their leadership and support skills.

Documentation/Products

A product of Clean and Green is a book that is given to each participant which outlines its use, its mission, the project agenda, the role and tasks, and the week-by-week curriculum with illustrations and worksheets. The eight-week Clean and Green curriculum schedule is on the following page.

EXHIBIT E

Eight week Clean & Green Curriculum Schedule

Week	First Meeting	Second Meeting	Third Meeting	Fourth Meeting
1	1) Business 2) Discussion of your mission" & "clean & green roles"	1) Ritual of colors 2) Names 3) Questions art & trash	Learning to ask questions	1) Teams report on the problems with roles 2) Reflection
2	1) Business 2) Practicing garbology "individual focus"	What is the opposite of trash?	1) Why clean & green? 2) "Why trees?"	1) Teams report on week's documentation 2) Reflection
3	1) Business 2) Practicing garbology "community focus"	Working on the "over night" mural	1) Top dog 2) Great chief	1) Teams report on week's documentation 2) Reflection
4	1) Business 2) Practicing garbology "diistrict focus"	If you were the planet earth.... 2) "Graduation pledge"	1) Group poem on "I want a job" 2) Reflection	1) Teams report on week's documentation
5	1) Business 2) Practicing garbology "Los Angeles focus"	"Nature is...."	1) Youth for hire: I 2) Graduation pledge revisited	1) Teams report on week's documentation 2) Reflection
6	1) Business 2) Practicing garbology "North American focus"		1) Youth for hire: II 2) Graduation pledge revisited	1) Teams report on week's documentation 2) Reflection
7	1) Business 2) Practicing garbology "Personal focus"	Practice:prepare for District reports		Practice District reports
8	District reports			

Magic Me

Bringing Young People Into Nursing Homes To Enrich The Lives Of The Elderly

Dispelling Young People's Fears About The Elderly

Baltimore, Maryland

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The inner-city of Baltimore, Maryland, is home-base for an intergenerational program that was conceived in 1981. Magic Me was created as the brainchild of entrepreneur Kathy Levin. Ms. Levin believes that young adolescents should be inspired to use their talents and energies to improve the quality of life of institutionalized elderly people.

She began with four schools in Baltimore. At the first school she asked students if they wanted to go with her to a nursing home, and only four volunteered. Instead of trying to break down resistance by discussing "geriatrics," Ms. Levin thought there had to be a better way to engage young people. What she sought was a way to tap their longing to be something more than they imagined they were. She wanted them to have fun and at the same time to experience challenge and power. Her idea was to find ways to help young people approach and interact with old people in an intimate manner. She wanted the young people to discover the real live thoughts and feelings within the bodies of the elderly.

The Magic Me philosophy is that freedom is gained by encouraging independence. The Magic Me design is built on the spirit of unleashing the energy and imagination of young adolescents, who are craving meaning and release. Students learn the value of the

elderly. They also learn the rewards inherent in helping others through personal commitment and mutual exchange, rather than the more impersonal forms of "I-give-you-take" charity. When Ms. Levin conducts one of her many presentations about the Magic Me program, she begins:

I know something
That you don't know
That I know -

But I know
That you know;
You just don't know that you know!
IT'S MAGIC ME!

Ms. Levin singlehandedly developed and operated Magic Me in Baltimore and shared the model with other states and countries for almost seven years. Currently, her main focus is primarily on promotion and fundraising. In 1988 Magic Me became more "professional," according to its founder, and used the nonprofit status of Magic Me to attract Baltimore-based foundation funding. With outside funding Ms. Levin was able to open an office and hire an executive director as well as a small staff. Magic Me takes its dynamic staff into the middle schools to work with some of the most difficult students. The students are led through a unique exercise designed to dispel their reluctance and fear of nursing homes and to interest the young people in visiting the nursing homes. There they engage in enriching activities with the elderly residents.

Besides the founder and executive director, the small Magic Me staff consists of a coordinator and an administrative assistant as

well as interns from the School of Social Work from the University of Maryland-Baltimore Campus. The director and coordinator with the assistance of the interns are responsible for the training and activities for all of the school-nursing home projects. The current annual budget for the Baltimore program is $100,000. The ABELL and Straus Foundations in Baltimore provide $95,000 in grants and the remaining $5,000 is from private contributions.

The Magic Me staff is involved in extensive coordination between the schools and the nursing home administrators. The first priority in working with a school is to obtain the sincere support of the principal. Magic Me staff promote education as an integral part of the program. The reflection component is also taken very seriously. Staff are continually looking for new ways to help the students understand the multiple meanings of what they are doing. Students learn to appreciate the new knowledge and insights they are gaining as well as the added meaning they are giving to the lives of the nursing home residents. Transportation is not a problem for the Magic Me students, because they usually visit nursing homes within the same neighborhoods as their schools.

Program Components

Recruitment. The principals and counselors are asked to identify 25 to 30 of their most difficult students who may benefit from Magic Me as a means of increasing youngsters' self-esteem. The target group is inner-city sixth, seventh, and eighth graders, who are considered to be "at-risk" based on a combination of poor grades, poor attendance, behavior problems and low socio-economic conditions. Inner-city kids have more need for approval according to Magic Me Executive Director, Alfred de la Cuesta.

Different populations glean different benefits from the program. By allowing inner-city youth to improve the quality of someone else's life, you give them a chance to manifest their personal power in positive ways. In effect, you instill them with the notion that they can actually bring about change. Privileged youngsters are exposed, many for the first time, to the impoverished realities of life. They develop a broader awareness of poverty and gain a greater perspective of their role in dealing with social needs.

Initial Orientation. Before any words are exchanged the Magic Me staff quickly bind the arms and legs of the students. Mouths are taped shut, eyeglasses are smeared, and distasteful odors are placed on some of them. The Magic Me staff asks the "captive" students if they would like to visit nursing homes for the elderly in their neighborhoods. In their bewilderment students usually say "no." After the students are unbound and brought back to their normal conditions, they participate in their first magical activity, an hour or two of discussion with the Magic Me staff. Students are encouraged to describe what is uncomfortable for them about old people. The students ask why they were tied up. Through the discussion that follows, they answer the questions for themselves. When they talk about the experience of being bound, they are encouraged to think about what it would be like to be handicapped and unable to move parts of their bodies. The descriptions the students offer are likened to the conditions the students were in with the simulated handicaps of tape, bindings, etc. Students are helped to expand their thinking about elderly people and to see beyond their physical limitations. The entire meeting is very active and introspection is

combined with the "pitch" to have fun while helping someone. By the close of the session, most of the students are "hooked" and want to go to their neighborhood nursing home.

Follow-up Orientation. Up to three additional orientation sessions are provided to help the students gain a deeper understanding of older people and themselves in relation to the elderly. A tour of a nursing home is included; expectations and behavior within the program are outlined; and a contract is drawn up and signed by the students and Magic Me staff. Parents or guardians sign a permission form. Magic Me T-shirts are issued to each participant.

Nursing Home Activities. Students are challenged to think of interesting activities to do with the residents in or out of the nursing homes. They go to nursing homes in their neighborhoods for one hour each week and participate with the residents in a wide variety of activities that may include parties, games, and special field trips such as sailing.

Reflection. An integral part of the Magic Me program is to help the young participants realize the deeper meaning of their service activities and the needs of the nursing homes residents. The youngsters are encouraged to reflect on the meaning of their Magic Me activities in relation to the residents, themselves, their community and their own lives within the larger world. Journals are kept and 15 minutes at the close of each nursing home visit is scheduled for journal-writing. During the third week of each month the nursing home visit is omitted, and students spend the full hour at their participating schools with Magic Me staff to reflect on their nursing home activities.

Publicity and Promotion. Media interest has been high for the

Magic Me program. Newspapers, radio, and television around the Baltimore area have promoted the program. Media interest has expanded around the country and Europe as the program continues to be broadly promoted. A half hour video tape was made about Magic Me. It was featured in April 1989 on the Baltimore TV station WJZ, "Time to Care," a regularly scheduled magazine focusing on service in Maryland. A musical play has also been composed to spread the magic of Magic Me. Hundreds of the artistic Magic Me T-shirts around Baltimore add to the visibility of the program. The glitter T-shirts picture a purple-colored child juggling a rainbow. According to Patty Holland, Program Coordinator,

> *Kids are always asking how they can get into the program. There seems to be an obvious high status related to Magic Me.*

Site Visit Observations

Booker T. Washington Middle School

I joined the Magic Me program director and coordinator to go to Booker T. Washington School to meet a new group of Magic Me students. The students had completed their Magic Me orientation sessions and were set to make their first nursing home visit. I met the school principal, Ruth Bukatman, who clearly supported the program. She exchanged information about attendance, performance, and behavior of various students with the Magic Me staff. About 20 students were dressed in their Magic Me T-shirts and more or less ready for their new experience at the nursing home.

The Nursing Home

It was a short walk to the nursing home, and along the way the students acted like typical youngsters. They talked loudly and exuded noisy, boisterous uncontained energy. Frankly, I could not imagine how the young people were going to interact with the nursing home residents. But, then I reminded myself that they were only 11-14 years of age; that the school day had just ended; and that they were probably anxious about going to the nursing home for their very first time.

When we entered the nursing home, I realized that it was quite different from the one I had recently visited to see the mother of a friend. That one was modern, clean, and cheery in a physical sense. This nursing home was in an old inner-city building. It was grim, stark and full of unpleasant odors. Even more distressing, however, was the resignation, the boredom, the absent-look in the eyes of the residents. I realized that despite the difference in decor, the inactivity and lack of purpose was evident to about the same degree as the nursing home of my friend's mother.

We were directed to a large plain room with a mixture of well-worn chairs and two long conference tables. The students from Booker T. Washington Middle School were to spend one hour at the nursing home. With trepidation, I asked Mr. de la Cuesta how they were going to get the students and the residents to interact. To my surprise, Mr. de la Cuesta said, "We'll play volleyball as an ice-breaker!" Volleyball, indeed, I thought as I looked around at the residents in their wheelchairs and their looks of disinterest.

The conference tables were placed together to make one long table, a beach ball was blown up, and the residents in wheelchairs

were brought in close to the tables. Magic Me staff explained the plan for the students to visit the residents on a weekly basis. Then the volleyball rules were explained and sides were determined with an equal number of elderly and youth on each team. Within a couple of minutes the students were loudly engaged in the volleyball game, and it took only a few more minutes for the residents to join in their enthusiasm. Wheelchairs were pulled in closer, residents moved in from the outer edges of the room, and a couple of residents even used their amputated arm stubs to return the volley. The young people were soon sensitized to the fact that real team effort was necessary to allow for some of their teammates' physical limitations, and they helped with inventive setups.

After a half hour of volleyball the Magic Me staff instructed the students to take a name tag and magic marker and go to a resident, whom they might like to know better in future visits. The students introduced themselves, asked residents their names, got the correct spelling, and made name tags for their new friends. This was a more personalized activity to follow the volleyball icebreaker. The goal was obviously to build rapport, and it was achieved from the number of heartwarming scenes between residents and students.

The final exercise at the nursing home involved 15 minutes for reflection. The students got out their journals, and they were asked to write about how they felt when they first came to the nursing home. Secondly, they were asked to write about how they felt as they were preparing to leave. And, thirdly, how they felt about coming the following week. The journals were collected by Magic Me staff for safekeeping until the next week. I observed a few reflections:

Jamie W:

At first I thought it wasn't going to be fun because I was scared. And now when I tried it, I had a great time!

Kenrita L:

I was very frightened and then, when we started to play it was very much fun. And, I really like that lady, Miss Daisy.

Lakisha P:

At first I was scared, but then when it was almost time to go I realized how much fun I had with the old people.

Impact

Magic Me operates in 10 public middle schools and five private middle schools in Baltimore. Ideally, students become involved in the sixth grade and continue through the eighth grade. The 1989 figures indicate more than 690 participants, 1,000 residents served, 11,836 hours of service provided. The cost per child per year is less than $200. Although the Magic Me participants receive no pay for their hours of community service, the adjusted program cost per child is $140, when the minimum wage rate is factored for the average hours of service. The numbers continue to indicate increasing benefits the longer the program continues.

The immediate effect of Magic Me is two-fold. It improves the quality of time of institutionalized elderly people who look forward to activities with the spirited young people. It builds self-esteem and confidence within diverse groups of young people who would most likely not imagine themselves dramatically influencing the lives of others.

In the spring semester of 1988 a research evaluation team from the University of Maryland-Baltimore Campus began a pilot evaluation of the Magic Me program focusing primarily on students' levels of self-esteem, attitudes toward the handicapped and elderly, school attendance, grades, and peer support. The evaluation will be completed in early 1990 and will provide documentation on the impact of Magic Me.

Institutionalization

The Magic Me project operators will more than likely continue to perceive this model as functioning best by remaining outside the administration of the schools. Ms. Levin expresses concern that the creativity and vitality necessary to the success of Magic Me could be compromised if administered from within the administrative structure and constraints of the schools.

Replication Potential

The number of participating schools grows each year. The model is relatively simple, but requires very high energy, creative, and highly committed people to staff it. Local foundations or other private funding is necessary for the current administrative arrange-

ment. Beyond Baltimore there has been much interest. Magic Me programs have been replicated already in Cleveland, Ohio; Buffalo, New York; Milford, Nebraska; London, England; and elsewhere.

Documentation/Products

The most recent Magic Me product is a Training Manual that offers a process and tools to facilitate the reflection component in a comprehensive and quality manner. Journal-writing and discussions are the core of the reflection component. This aspect contains four basic sets of questions. The questions begin with the most obvious and tangible experiences the young middle graders can relate to and continue to expand.

The reflection component is addressed in different creative forms and formats. Magic Me participants are asked:

(1) to recount the facts about a particular experience — what they did;

(2) to recall why they did it;

(3) to reflect on how they felt about it; and

(4) to think of solutions that the larger society could under take to improve the situation or what each of them might do as a citizen in this country or the larger world in which they live.

Fresh Force

Involving
Junior High Students City-Wide
In Community Service Projects

Minneapolis, Minnesota

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The essential purpose of Fresh Force is to invite young teenagers to create and partake in community betterment projects on a volunteer basis. City support is broad-based, enthusiastic and active. A number of community, school and agency representatives, city officials and local foundations are active partners in Fresh Force projects and purposes. Students from all ten junior high schools in Minneapolis, Minnesota, work in a variety of community projects which are operated to a great extent by the young people themselves.

Fresh Force is made up of over 250 young teens from Minneapolis public schools. They are assisted by school liaisons and university student service leaders. Each school develops its own model for working with volunteers and the 35 agency representatives involved in the planning processes each year. A management committee of sponsors meets once a month to oversee program activities, establish policies and procedures and identify funding resources in the community.

The program grew out of the work of a task force formed in 1985 to focus on youth issues. Representatives from the county, the park board, the Minneapolis Public Schools, and the Pillsbury Company reached the following conclusions:

- Because many worthwhile public sector programs have been reduced, there is a great need for new resources to meet community needs.

- The most appropriate target group for development is the junior high student. Seventh and eighth graders possess a high degree of altruism and energy. They are too young to get jobs, but they seek opportunities for responsibility. Peer influence is great, and they have considerable non-school time available to engage in positive activities.

- The encouragement of youth involvement in community betterment has been promoted successfully in several other areas of the country.

- There are fewer and fewer positive transition experiences from childhood to adulthood; experiences which prepare youth for community involvement, jobs and leadership roles.

- It is important for the future of our community to both foster the spirit of volunteerism in our youth and improve its image with an increasingly aging population.

Fresh Force began in January 1986 as a two-year pilot project that would operate during the school year. It was initiated, managed, and sponsored by a partnership of the Minneapolis Public Schools, the Mayor of Minneapolis, the Pillsbury Company, and the United Way of Minneapolis Area agency. The Fresh Force philosophy is enunciated in these words of Geisela Konopka, D.S.W., University of Minnesota:

Adolescents need to experiment with wider circles of life — meet various kinds of people, see other cultures. They need to experiment with their own strength and value systems — lead groups, try out intimate relationships, engage in some form of adventure. The experimentation necessary to adolescence usually includes a feeling of risk. It is their way of learning about their own, and their surrounding reality.

Fresh Force is founded on the proposition that young people are the key to the program's success. The Fresh Force launching theme, Youth For A Change, has a double meaning. It suggests kids changing the community toward a better quality of life. It also underscores the promise that Fresh Force is not to be adult-run, but rather a youth-run program. The young people involved in the early developmental stages came from YMCAs, student council members, and individuals recommended by counselors. These youngsters had a voice in making such decisions as naming the program and designing the Fresh Force logo. They were also the young people who were taped for the choreographed membership recruitment video featuring "The Jets." The student organizers also held a kick-off press conference, made regular appearances in the community to promote the program, ran meetings, and designed the original incentive structure for volunteers.

Program Components

Management Committee. A partnership of five groups contributes their resources, ideas and expertise to ensure the success of Fresh Force. The Management Committee includes representation from

the Minneapolis Public Schools, Mayor's Office, United Way of Minneapolis Area, Metropolitan Minneapolis YMCA and the Pillsbury Company.

Membership. The target population from which Fresh Force draws its members is seventh and eighth graders (ages 12-14). University students are sought as "service leaders." Service leaders attend a required bi-monthly seminar series for training and to reflect on their work. They contribute a minimum of three hours per week at a school or community agency. Each member receives an official Fresh Force Guide Book and a membership card.

Publicity/Promotion/Community Support. The entire greater Minneapolis community is involved in Fresh Force. Repeated visibility of Fresh Force is achieved through multiple means. Brochures and posters are placed in the junior high schools and recreation centers. Public service announcements are broadcast on radio and television. Personal and video presentations are made at schools, churches and youth group meetings. Local newspapers run articles. Television special appearances and cable programs have regularly publicized Fresh Force. Mass-mailings, newsletters, phone call surveys and follow-ups have all been utilized to increase community awareness.

Outreach/Recruitment. Fresh Force members are recruited primarily in their schools. Liaison persons are designated in each school to assist with recruitment, to act as information resources for young people and to assist them in identifying a community need. Program staff, college service leaders and young people themselves are involved in the outreach component of Fresh Force.

Project Selection. After a need is identified by a group of young

people, the next step is to choose a community collaborator with whom to join forces. This is usually the community agency responsible for meeting the need or the community group concerned about the issue. The community and the Fresh Force team of young people form a working partnership and together determine the nature of the activities Fresh Force will undertake.

Project Sponsorship. Each project requires a sponsor which must be a Minneapolis nonprofit organization. Sponsorship does not require a direct monetary cost. What it does require is staff support and minimal supervision, follow-up and training for staff about the needs, issues and potential of young people.

Leadership. Youth leadership is promoted because it allows for youth ownership and programming by individual schools. Leadership in Fresh Force can mean anything from coming up with a project idea and getting peers together to accomplish it to chairing a funding committee meeting or planning city-wide projects for all school groups.

Documentation of the Community Betterment Projects. Students are expected to document their projects with two or more of the following: a Progress Report to keep track of the number of volunteer hours; a Funding Request to list necessary supplies and equipment for the project and their cost; and an Action Plan, which includes the names of members taking part in a particular project, time frames for the work, and a description of how the project will be implemented.

Recognition. Fresh Force has an incremental incentive and award system to recognize members' volunteer efforts. Members receive a Fresh Force T-shirt after 15 hours of volunteer work; a job reference

letter signed by Mayor Fraser after 35 hours; and "Special" Century Club recognition after 100 hours. These tangible incentives and awards are explicit acknowledgement that Fresh Force efforts are worthwhile. They also draw attention to young people's contributions to the city and add stature to what they have accomplished.

Staffing. The staffing of Fresh Force has evolved over time to become a creative mixture of full-time and part-time expertise, paid and unpaid, and drawn from many sectors of the community. This has kept personnel costs relatively low, made available a wide array of talent, and enabled a number of individuals to contribute. The paid staff consists of five percent time of the Executive Director of the University of Minnesota-YMCA where Fresh Force is housed, a full-time Fresh Force Director, and twenty-percent time clerical support. Volunteer resources/support include twelve individual school liaisons, 30-40 agency representatives, six management committee sponsors, 20-25 college student service leaders, and 5-10 adult resource specialists.

Site Visits Observations

I met with Tim Gusk, Director of Fresh Force, at the University of Minnesota - YMCA for the first time in July 1988. At the time there was limited Fresh Force summer activity; a few members were involved in continuing their school year projects into the summer. Mr. Gusk assumed his position with Fresh Force in November of 1986, ten months after the pilot program began. When he took over, he carried on the program in the same manner as the original director with the emphasis on empowering youth themselves to run the program.

Gusk was taking advantage of the summer to reflect on the 18 months of the Fresh Force pilot, to assess strengths and difficulties of the program design, and to formulate improvements. Difficulties included: complexity of schedules, late acquisition of needed project materials, incomplete documentation of official Fresh Force membership, unbalanced school representation and demonstrated interest, unclear understanding of the purpose of the sponsoring agencies, and concern about the Fresh Force logo because some viewed it as gang-related.

Upon reflection one of the biggest lessons learned, according to Gusk, was that not all young people could or should assume program leadership roles. He said,

> *Conceptually, the idea was for the young people to literally run the program themselves. In the beginning that was how the program was implemented. The kids, however, did not know how to build the necessary ongoing working relationships — the liaison work between the schools and the various community agencies and organizations.*

Mr. Gusk found that more realistic attitudes had to be taken regarding what school groups could do. He initiated the school liaison arrangement between each of the schools and the Fresh Force Program. Mr. Gusk also found that the involvement of more community agencies was necessary to broaden the work of the program. He undertook a needs assessment project with each school to identify more agencies as potential service sites.

Through the guidance of the Management Committee and the University YMCA the administrative and budget problems were